Indo-Russian trade talks

38. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Russia has agreed to purchase Indian tobacco during the recent Indo-Russian trade talks held in January, 2000;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) other decisions taken for diversifying and expanding bilateral trade in hi-tech items?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) and (b) The 6th Session of the Indo-Russian Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation (IRIGC) was held in New Delhi on January 14-15, 2000. A Protocol of the 6th Session of the IRIGC was signed at the conclusion of the meeting by the Co-Chairmen of the IRIGC, Finance Minister on our side and the Deputy Prime Minister of the Russian Federation, Dr. Viktor Khristenko. During the meeting, various measures relating to further development of trade and economic cooperation between India and the Russian Federation were deliberated upon. It was noted the tobacco is among the traditional items of export from India to the Russian Federation. Both side agreed to take necessary steps to expand the overall volume of trade, including tobacco.

(c) The 6th Session of the IRIGC agreed to take appropriate measures towards further expansion and diversification of bilateral trade through greater representation of non-traditional and hi-tech items.

Visit of US President to India

39. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the President of U.S.A. is scheduled to visit India shortly;

(b) if so, the avowed objectives of his visit;